



# **Recommended Outline for Set Time Prayers**

“These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves  
to the prayers.” (Acts 1:14)

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## Introduction

The most important thing about the set times of prayer is that we stop and acknowledge the Father.

This guide is merely one suggested way of doing that. Do not be overwhelmed by its content; take it slowly. Remember that as you examine this guide, you need to consider how much time you have to pray, as well as other details, such as who's praying with you (children, etc.).

The word *siddur* means “order,” and it contains the order of the traditional daily prayers. From the most ancient times, liturgical prayers were recited from memory. It was not until about 850 CE that Rav Amram Gaon compiled the first written codification of a *siddur*. Today there exists several different versions and translations.

This outline follows the *Complete Artscroll Siddur* and covers weekday prayers. (On Shabbat the prayers change slightly.) Remember that the *siddur* can be a wonderful guide for times of prayer, but our prayers are not limited to it. The page numbers are for the Ashkenazi *siddur* with the Sephardic page numbers appearing in brackets.

Some prayers require a *minyán*, which is a group of at least ten men. This is the traditional minimum number to constitute an assembly (see Genesis 18:32 and Exodus 18:21, 25). Although we have not included any of these in this outline, you may want to explore these prayers if you pray with greater numbers of people. While some prayers depend on having a certain number of people, none of the prayers listed are gender specific. These can be prayed by both men and women, and we do encourage families to pray together.

Finally, note that this document is not a blanket approval of everything contained in the *Complete Artscroll Siddur*. For example, consider skipping any stanza or prayer in the *siddur* that begins with the language, “For the sake of unification...” or “I am ready...” or “I intend to fulfill...” These prayers contain kabalistic influences that are sometimes contrary to our faith. While this *siddur* is very enriching, it still was created by people who do not share our beliefs in Messiah Yeshua. As such, please approach the *siddur* carefully with prayer and study. Always know what you are praying and why you are praying it.

## Preparations for Prayer

Traditionally the first area of preparation is to wash ones hands. This is typically done with a special washing cup if available. It is done to commemorate the priests washing before entering the Temple for service, and it can help the worshipper begin to contemplate what he is about to do in terms of prayer.<sup>1</sup> Due to this practice, ancient places of prayer were often built near bodies of water, and this may be why Paul went to the riverside on Shabbat where he supposed “that there would be a place of prayer.”<sup>2</sup>

For men, preparation for prayer traditionally also includes the donning of *tefillin* and a *tallit*. The details of these procedures can be found on pages 3-7 (3-7) in the *siddur*.

An essential concept in liturgical prayer is that these written, liturgical prayers are not really prayers until we have first received them into our hearts. To do this requires *kavannah*. *Kavannah* means “concentration” or “focus.” The Apostles Peter and Paul seem to attain a high level of this when they fell into a “trance.”<sup>3</sup> It might be a good idea to take some time to ready your heart and mind before you pray. This does not have to be more than a minute or so, but it helps prepare the heart and mind for worship.



## Basics

Traditionally the most essential component of the set times of prayer is the *Shemoneh Esreh* (also called the *Amidah*). The *Shemoneh Esreh* (see below for page numbers) is traditionally said to have been created around 560 BCE by the men of the Great Assembly, which included Ezra and the last of the prophets.<sup>4</sup> It may indeed be this old, for we find the structure and outline of the *Shemoneh Esreh* in both the books of Maccabees and Ben Sira, which both date to around the second century BCE.<sup>5</sup>

Reciting the *Shemoneh Esreh* is seen as the most minimal way one can fulfill the commandment “to serve the LORD your God” (i.e., to pray), and it parallels the sacrifices offered up at the set times. This prayer was so central that it was actually called “*HaTefillah*” [the prayer] and is perhaps alluded to in the Greek of Acts 6:4, which literally says, “We will devote ourselves to the prayer.”

The *Aveinu* (“Our Father” or the Lord’s Prayer) appears to be a prayer that was recited after the *Shemoneh Esreh*. Examples of prayers like this are found in the Talmud.<sup>6</sup> Philip Sigal states, “thus in Luke 11:2 ‘Say this when you pray’, signifies ‘when you recite the *tefilah*’ (That is, the ‘*amidah*’), use this as a closing private prayer.”<sup>7</sup>

The *Shema* is recited traditionally in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 6:7 in both the morning and evening. This commandment and all of its implications was one of the two that Yeshua considered to be the greatest.<sup>8</sup> The *Shema* in the liturgy is surrounded by blessings both before and after. These blessings date back to the time of the Master.<sup>9</sup>

Our custom at FFOZ is to recite at least the *Shemoneh Esreh* including the *Aveinu* at the set times of prayer. The *Shema* text is also suggested to be recited both in the morning and the evening in order to fulfill the traditional interpretation of the commandment. While the *Ma’ariv* (evening) time of prayer was originally considered optional, the evening recital of the *Shema* was not.<sup>10</sup>

<b><i>Shacharit</i> (Morning Prayer)</b>
<i>Shema</i>
<i>Shemoneh Esreh</i> with <i>Avenu</i>
<b><i>Mincha</i> (Afternoon Prayer)</b>
<i>Shemoneh Esreh</i> with <i>Avenu</i>
<b><i>Ma’ariv</i> (Evening Prayer)</b>
<i>Shema</i>
<i>Shemoneh Esreh</i> with <i>Avenu</i> (Optional)

## Further Expansion

As you progress in your times of prayer, you may want to include more sections from the *siddur*. Below is an outline of each of the three times of prayer and some highlights from each of the sections that many of us find beneficial.



### **Morning Prayers (*Shacharit*):**

- ♦ Morning Blessings [pages 13-57 (15-59)]

*Highlights:*

- ♦ *MaTovu* [page 13 (15)]
- ♦ Blessings of the Torah [pages 17(19-21)]
- ♦ Blessings of the Morning [pages 19-21 (21-23)]
- ♦ *Akeidah* [pages 23–29 (25-33)]
- ♦ Offerings [pages 31–49 (33-51)]
- ♦ *Pesukei D'zimrah* “Verses of Praise” [pages 59–83 (61-89)]
 

*Highlights:*

  - ♦ *Baruch She'amar* “Blessed is He who spoke” [pages 59-61 (67-69)]
  - ♦ Psalm 100 [page 65 (69)]
  - ♦ *Ahsrei* “Praiseworthy” and Psalm 145 [pages 67-69 (71-75)]
  - ♦ *Yistabach* “May your name be praised” page 83 (87)
- ♦ Blessing of the *Shema* [pages 85–97 (89-103)]
 

*Highlights:*

  - ♦ Blessing before *Shema* [pages 85-91 (89-95)]
  - ♦ *Shema* Scriptural Texts [pages 91-95 (95-99)]
  - ♦ Blessing After *Shema* [pages 95-97 (99-103)]
- ♦ *Shemoneh Esrei* [page 99-119 (103-125)]
 

*Highlights:*

  - ♦ Prayer for healing: under title, “Heal us, Hashem—then we will be healed...” insert names and pray spontaneously and personally for these needs. [page 105 (111)]
  - ♦ Omit the “Against Heretics” Benediction [page 107 (113)]
  - ♦ General prayer needs and request: under title, “Hear our voice...” pray spontaneously and personally for these needs. [page 109 (115)]
  - ♦ Pray *Aveinu* “Our Father” (The Lords Prayer) after last benediction instead of “My God guard...” [page 119 (125)]
  - ♦ Close with *Oseh Shalom* “He who makes peace...” [page 119 (125)]
- ♦ Post *Shemoneh Esrei* Section [pages 119b-175 (127-193)]
 

*Highlights:*

  - ♦ *Aleynu* [pages 159-161 (187-189)]
  - ♦ Song of the Day [pages 163-169 (169-179)]
- ♦ After *Shacharit* Readings [pages 177-187j (195-199j)]
 

*Highlights:*

  - ♦ *Ashrei* “Prayers of the Master” [Mathew 5:3–11]
  - ♦ *Davar Yeshua* “The Word of Yeshua” [Mathew 5–7]
  - ♦ Six Remembrances [page 177 (195)]
  - ♦ The Ten Commandments [page 181 (199)]



### Afternoon Prayers (*Mincha*):

- ♦ Offerings (Sephardic Only – pages 249-251)
- ♦ *Ashrei* “Praiseworthy” and Psalm 145 [page 233 (253-255)]
- ♦ *Shemoneh Esrei* “Eighteen Benedictions” [pages 235-249 (255-273)]

#### *Highlights:*

- ♦ Prayer for healing: under title, “Heal us, Hashem—then we will be healed...” insert names and pray spontaneously and personally for these needs. [page 239 (261)]
- ♦ Omit the “Against Heretics” Benediction [page 241 (263)]
- ♦ General prayer needs and request: under title, “Hear our voice...” pray spontaneously and personally for these needs. [page 243 (265)]
- ♦ Pray *Aveinu* “Our Father” (The Lord’s Prayer) after last benediction instead of “My God guard...” [page 249 (273)]
- ♦ Close with *Oseh Shalom* “He who makes peace...” [page 249 (273)]
- ♦ *Aleynu* [pages 253-255 (279)]

### Evening Prayers (*Ma’ariv*):

- ♦ Psalm 134 (Sephardic Only – page 283)
- ♦ “He, the merciful one” [page 257 (285)]
- ♦ Blessing of the *Shema* [pages 257-265 (285-293)]

#### *Highlights:*

- ♦ Blessing before *Shema* [pages 257-259 (285-287)]
- ♦ *Shema* Scriptural Texts [pages 259-261 (287-289)]
- ♦ Blessing After *Shema* [pages 261-265 (289-293)]
- ♦ *Shemoneh Esrei* “Eighteen Benedictions” [pages 267-279 (295-309)]

#### *Highlights:*

- ♦ Prayer for healing: under title, “Heal us, Hashem—then we will be healed...” insert names and pray spontaneously and personally for these needs. [page 271 (299)]
- ♦ Omit the “Against Heretics” Benediction [pages 271-273 (301)]
- ♦ General prayer needs and request: under title, “Hear our voice...” pray spontaneously and personally for these needs. [page 273-275 (303)]
- ♦ Pray *Aveinu* “Our Father” (The Lords Prayer) after last benediction instead of “My God guard...” [page 277-279 (307)]
- ♦ Close with *Oseh Shalom* “He who makes peace.” [page 279 (309)]
- ♦ *Aleynu* [page 281 (311)]

## Endnotes

- 1 Exodus 30:18–21.
- 2 Acts 16:13. See Josephus 14:258 and Philo *Flaccus* 122 and Joseph Shulam and Hilliary LeCornu, *A Commentary on the Jewish Roots of Acts*, (Jerusalem, Israel: Academon Ltd., 2003), 879–880.
- 3 Acts 10:10, 11:5 and 22:17.
- 4 b.*Megillah* 17b.
- 5 See 2 Maccabees 1:24-29 and Ben Sira 36:1–11.
- 6 b.*Berachot*. 16b–17a.
- 7 Philip Sigal, “Early Christian and Rabbinic Liturgical Affinities”, *New Testament Studies*, Volume XXX 1984, 73.
- 8 Mark 12:28-31.
- 9 David Instone-Brewer, *Traditions of the Rabbis from the Era of the New Testament*, Volume 1 (Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 45-47.
- 10 Rabbi Nosson Scherman, *The Complete Artscroll Siddur: Nusach Sefard*, (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publication Ltd, 1985), 282. See also Instone-Brewer, 52-53.